

many others like him, take over some of the more mundane duties to free up deputies for other work. Mr. Karibo visits the elderly, works on crime investigations, helps with traffic patrols and minor accidents as well as other activities.

The Citrus County Sheriff's Office has a very active Citizens' Academy program which allows ordinary citizens to learn more about the inner workings of the sheriff's department and feeds into their volunteer program. According to Sheriff Dawsy, "The concept of the Citizens' Academy involves opening up the Sheriff's Office to the public and showing citizens exactly what we do and how we do it." As a result, graduates of the 10-week course are better equipped to assess safety issues and share with others their knowledge of law enforcement practices and policies.

Given Sheriff Dawsy's commitment to the philosophy of community-oriented policing and proactive problem solving, he says he sees the Citizens' Academy as an effective way of bringing law enforcement and the public together in an informal, educational forum.

The benefits of such a partnership can only strengthen the entire community in terms of public safety and quality of life. Last year alone, volunteers clocked in over 90,000 hours working for the betterment of the community. Volunteers drove 561,000 miles, made more than 44,000 house checks and assisted more than 3,400 citizens at community offices.

Sheriff Dawsy and the Citrus County Sheriff's Office volunteers program have been an outstanding service to our community, and I would like to thank them all for their efforts. Their program is a model for others to follow, and I am honored to stand here and recognize them today. Congratulations to all of them on a job well done.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, early Friday morning, under cover of night, the Republican plan to create a Medicare prescription drug benefit was forced through the Committee on Energy and Commerce on strict party lines.

The prescription drug proposal made by the Republican leadership in Congress is so farfetched and so inadequate that it is an insult to the seniors it alleges to help. This legislation calls for private insurance companies to deliver drug coverage, and the coverage is minimal.

We sought to improve the bill, but our efforts were stymied by a coalition of the Republican leadership and their corporate sponsors, the brand name drug industry.

Democrats insist that any prescription drug plan for seniors should be ad-

ministered through Medicare, the program seniors know and trust. We have insisted the benefits be at least as generous as the coverage enjoyed by Members of Congress, and we sought to lower drug prices, ending drug industry patent abuses and enhancing competition in the prescription drug marketplace.

The need for a prescription drug benefit under Medicare is undisputed. Twelve million American seniors lack any form of drug coverage. This situation is made worse by the fact that American seniors and others without drug coverage pay the highest prices in the world for their prescriptions.

This is not the first time Republicans have attempted to capitalize on the need of America's seniors for a drug benefit but is the most blatant. Republican after Republican will come to the House floor in the next 3 days, saying seniors deserve a drug benefit as good as Members of Congress have. Unfortunately, though, according to the non-partisan Congressional Research Service, the Republican plan is 40 percent less than the coverage offered to Members of Congress.

During last week's markup, I offered an amendment that would replace the standard coverage in the Republican bill with the same coverage offered to Members of Congress.

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But the night before the amendment was offered, Republicans adjourned the committee markup early so that they could attend a \$30 million fundraising dinner underwritten by Glaxo-Wellcome, a British pharmaceutical company which gave \$250,000 that night to the Republican Party. When Republicans returned from that fundraiser in which the drug companies gave well over a million dollars in total, when they returned from that fundraiser the next day, it came as no surprise that Republican colleagues voted my amendment down, meaning that the House will be forced to vote this week on legislation that would provide seniors with a significantly less drug benefit than Members of the Congress. In other words, Republicans are going to give Members of Congress a much better drug benefit than seniors will enjoy.

The Republican bill is not designed to ensure that seniors and disabled Americans gain access to drug coverage. It is designed to ensure that seniors and disabled Americans lose access to what they want to do, which is privatize Medicare. Unless the goal is to phase out Medicare and phase in an insurance voucher system, it makes no sense to maintain a public program for medical and surgical benefits but for seniors to purchase private coverage for prescription drug benefits. If this bill is not about privatizing Medicare, if it is actually meant to provide seniors real drug coverage, why is there a hole in the plan's coverage? Why do the benefits decline as an enrollee's drug

costs go up? Insurance is supposed to protect individuals with high health care costs, not to desert them. So why this kind of Republican plan that serves the insurance interests and drug company interests but not seniors?

On May 8 the United Seniors Association, a group funded by the prescription drug industry, announced it would begin a \$3 million television ad campaign touting the GOP drug prescription drug plan. Guess who is paying for the media blitz? The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America are paying for the media blitz, a trade group representing major drug companies. In other words, the drug industry is using dollars they gouge from American consumers to advertise the Republican drug bill.

What should that say? Would they advertise a bill they thought would be hard on the drug companies and drive a hard bargain with America's drug companies? Drug companies do not like the Democrats' bill because we harness the collective purchasing power of 40 million Medicare beneficiaries to demand discounts, volume discounts, to demand fair prices. Our bill gives seniors good coverage, real coverage, reliable coverage just like Medicare, plus we are tough on the drug companies. Glaxo-Wellcome, the company that sponsored the major Republican fundraiser last week, charges Americans the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs. Listen to that again. Glaxo-Wellcome, British-owned prescription drug company, charges seniors the highest prices of any country in the world. The Republican plan is written by and for the drug companies. The Democrats' plan supports seniors.

INTRODUCTION OF CAPITOL POLICE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KERNs). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, since last year's terrorist and anthrax attacks, Capitol Police officers have faced extraordinary challenges. For months after the attacks, most worked twelve-hour shifts, six days a week, to assure that Congress could continue its work. Such grueling shifts were required even with help from the District of Columbia National Guard, whose members stood watch with our Police for five months. The Guard has resumed its normal duties, and the twelve-hour shifts have eased, but Capitol Police still confront extraordinary challenges.

Unfortunately for Congress, its staff and visitors, Capitol Police also confront extraordinary opportunities—to seek employment elsewhere. As trained law-enforcement professionals, Capitol Police officers are always in demand by other law-enforcement agencies. However, in these times of heightened security, overall demand for trained personnel has never been higher. As a result, the Capitol Police are losing officers at an alarming rate. As of June 1, the Capitol Police had already lost 78 officers